

Message Text

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PAGE 01 WELLIN 00380 250624Z
ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-02 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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R 250508Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4795
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMCONSUL AUCKLAND POUCH

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HONG KONG FOR INS/DIDIR/FELDMAN

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, NZ
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON NEW ZEALAND PROGRAM FOR INDOCHINESE
REFUGEES

REF: 77 WELLINGTON 4561

1. AS A FOLLOW-UP TO AN EARLY JANUARY PRESS REPORT THAT
"UP TO AN ADDITIONAL 50 INDOCHINESE FAMILIES" WILL BE
ALLOWED TO SETTLE IN NEW ZEALAND, EMBOFF REVIEWED NEW
ZEALAND REFUGEE PROGRAM WITH LEN BEATH OF UN DIVISION, MFA,
JANUARY 24. ACCORDING TO BEATH, THE 50 FAMILIES ARE THE
SAME ONES AUTHORIZED BY A DECISION OF THE GNZ CABINET IN
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PAGE 02 WELLIN 00380 250624Z

OCTOBER (SEE REFTTEL) BUT NOT PREVIOUSLY PUBLICIZED. WITH
THE INITIAL 70 FAMILIES (420 PERSONS) WHICH ARRIVED IN NZ
IN OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER NOW THROUGH THE PROCESSING PIPELINE
(SPONSORSHIP, HOUSING, JOBS, ETC.), THE GOVERNMENT FEELS
THAT THE ECONOMY CAN NOW ABSORB AS MANY AS AN ADDITIONAL
300 REFUGEES, PROVIDED THEY DO NOT ARRIVE AT ONCE.

2. UNLIKE THE FIRST GROUP WHICH HAD NO ATTACHMENT TO NZ AND WHOSE TRAVEL WAS GNZ SPONSORED, THIS SECOND GROUP OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WILL BE RESTRICTED TO FAMILIES WHO ALREADY HAVE CLOSE RELATIONS IN NEW ZEALAND, AND THEY WOULD EITHER HAVE TO PAY THEIR OWN TRAVEL OR BE PRIVATELY SPONSORED. BEATH SAID THE GNZ HAS RECEIVED APPLICATIONS FROM ABOUT 20 FAMILIES IN THIS SECOND GROUP, AND THAT ONE FAMILY GROUP HAS NOW BEEN APPROVED. HE SAID THE GNZ WILL RELY UPON ITS OWN EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN BANGKOK AND SINGAPORE, AS WELL AS THE UNHCR, TO SCREEN APPROPRIATE CASES.

3. EMBOFF RAISED AGAIN WITH BEATH THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ADDITIONAL OR REGULAR NZ QUOTA OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES. BEATH SAID THERE WAS NO POSSIBILITY AT THE PRESENT TIME. HE MENTIONED THE DEPRESSED NZ ECONOMY, THE ALREADY HIGH UNEMPLOYMENT RATE (CURRENTLY AT A POST WORLD WAR II HIGH) AND SAID THAT THE EXECUTIVE BODY OF THE INTER-CHURCH COUNCIL ON IMMIGRATION WAS REPORTING "PARISH RESOURCES" AS ALREADY "OVER-STRETCHED" BY THE FIRST GROUP OF 420 REFUGEES. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT AUSTRALIA, IN VIEW OF ITS CLOSE RELATIONS WITH NEW ZEALAND AND THE ARRIVAL OF REFUGEES ON ITS OWN NORTHERN SHORES, HAD DISCUSSED INDOCHINESE REFUGEES WITH THE GNZ, BEATH SAID THAT TO THE BEST OF HIS KNOWLEDGE NO ONE HAD APPROACHED THE GNZ ON REFUGEES EXCEPT THE US AND UNHCR.

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PAGE 03 WELLIN 00380 250624Z

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